



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

For Release: January 18, 1990

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NEW INFORMATION ON IMPORT OF SPORT-HUNTED AFRICAN ELEPHANT TROPHIES ANNOUNCED

Assistant Secretary of the Interior Constance Harriman recently clarified current U.S. policy on importation of sport-hunted African elephant trophies into the United States. "The explanation reflects concern the United States has for the rapidly dwindling African elephant population, because the limited imports allowed must be beneficial to the species," Harriman said.

The U.S. policy was made in accordance with the African Elephant Conservation Act, and is consistent with the recent reclassification of the species from Appendix II to the more critical Appendix I under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). This reclassification was adopted during an international conference of CITES member nations held in October, 1989, and becomes effective January 18, 1990.

Beginning on January 18, no African elephants or parts may be imported into the United States without a CITES Appendix I import permit issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and an Appendix I export permit or re-export certificate from an ivory-producing country that has submitted an export quota for 1990.

The Service will consider issuing import permits only for noncommercial trophy imports from nations with healthy elephant populations and strong management programs that clearly enhance the survival of the species and effectively control poaching.

Current information on particular elephant populations and management practices indicates the Service may not be able to justify issuance of import permits for trophies taken in countries other than Zimbabwe, and possibly South Africa, on or after January 18, 1990.

If a sport-hunted trophy shipment is consigned to a common carrier for export to the United States prior to January 18, 1990, and it is not accompanied by a CITES Appendix I permit but otherwise meets all United States and CITES import requirements, as a general rule and until further notice, the Service will not refuse clearance. Imports without required permits and documentation will be seized and forfeiture procedures initiated.

For more information on permit requirements, refer to the Notice of Information No. 21 published in the January 11, 1990 Federal Register or call the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Office of Management Authority at 703-358-2104.

INT REQ 0741-0

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